

From: [Wanda S. Ballentine](#)
To: [Public Hearing;](#)
CC:
Subject: Please deny the Bank of Wal-Mart
Date: Sunday, April 09, 2006 5:01:24 PM
Attachments:

If for no other reason, Wal-Mart should be denied the ability to start a bank because it is already the largest retail company in the world and thus has concentrated way too much power and control of many aspects of people and communities than one might realize (read Charles Fishman's, "The Wal-Mart Effect."). Allowing it into the banking business would concentrate even more financial and commercial power in its hands. This should not be allowed.

While some of Wal-Mart's "effect" has been beneficial, most of it has not - it has destroyed small local businesses and eaten at the core of communities. Local businesses, being involved with their communities, support many important community activities, and they keep money circulating in the community rather than sending it all off to headquarters in Arkansas. Meanwhile, the "cheap" prices which are the Wal-Mart trademark are created by conditions like low wages, unpaid overtime, poor health coverage if any, and sweatshop labor. Prices for the poor off the backs of the poor.

Furthermore, Wal-Mart's unrelenting pressure on suppliers to lower their prices results in inferior quality across the board. Levi Strauss couldn't make their jeans at the price Wal-Mart demanded, so they had to design a new product. If you buy Levis at Wal-Mart - are you really getting Levis??? You might get a cheap radio, but as it may only last half as long as a better made radio and you have to buy another - where's the savings?? Meanwhile, the landfills are filling up.

A Wal-Mart bank would have the same effect on local community banks as it has on local grocery stores, drug stores, and hardware stores, and more money would be drained from the community and siphoned back to Arkansas. The community might become capital poor - and what if someone wanted a loan to start a business that might be a Wal-Mart competitor?

I heard Wal-Mart is using the argument that its competitor, Target, was allowed to have a bank, so it should too. Well, Target should not have been allowed to have one either, so don't double the problem. And Target's not that much of a competitor - no threat to Wal-Mart, about one-sixth its size.

I have also heard that the FDIC board of directors might not even attend the hearing on Wal-Mart's application to develop a bank! I should think it incumbent on directors to attend ALL hearings - that is their job and what they're paid for!! This hearing is vital to the well-being of many communities, and deserves that a full hearing be given to what witnesses - and people like me who can't attend - have to say.